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Richland
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

**RICHLAND
COMMUNITY COLLEGE
VETERAN HANDBOOK**

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RICHLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE FINANCIAL AID VETERAN AFFAIRS

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How do I apply for Veterans' Educational Benefits?

1. Complete the Veterans Online Application (VONAPP) at vabenefits.vba.va.gov or see Financial Aid & Veterans' Affairs for a paper application. You will need your DD214, Member 4 (if applicable) to complete the application. It is important to note that the VONAPP will be processed by the VA much faster than a paper application.
2. The VA will process your application and send you a Certificate of Eligibility, if you are eligible for benefits.
3. If you need to contact the VA regarding your application or Certificate of eligibility you may call the VA at 888-442-4551.
4. Enroll in classes that are required for your certificate or degree.
5. Bring the following to the Financial Aid & Veterans' Affairs Office:
 - VA Certificate of Eligibility.
 - A copy of your DD214, Member 4, showing your honorable discharge or your Notice of Basic Eligibility (NOBE) if you do not have a DD214.
 - Students using Chapter 35 Survivor/Dependents benefits will not have a DD214, but must provide the veteran's name and social security number to receive benefits.
 - Student Records will need transcripts from high school or GED scores and official transcripts from any previous colleges you have attended. Military transcripts are optional, but you can have them sent to Student Records to be evaluated for transfer credit.
6. Submit a copy of your class schedule to the Financial Aid & Veterans' Affairs Office each semester and each time your schedule changes.
7. Sign a Veterans' Educational Benefits Procedure form once a year in the Financial Aid Office.

Things to Remember:

1. The VA will only allow students to attempt one certificate or degree at a time.
2. The VA will only cover classes that are required for the certificate or degree you have listed with the Student Success Center. Please make sure the degree/major listed on your class schedule is correct.
3. P ED 110 cannot be covered by VA benefits if you have had 6 months or more of active duty service. If you have had 6 months or more of active duty service, you can submit your DD214 to Student Records to receive Prior Credit for P ED.
4. Students using the Chapter 33 Post 9/11 GI Bill need to be enrolled in at least 7 credit hours for the entire fall and spring semesters or at least 6 credit hours for the entire Summer semester to receive the housing allowance. To receive the maximum housing allowance, students must be enrolled in 12 or more credit hours and take at least one class that meets on campus. Students that enroll in online-only classes will receive 50% BAH.
5. Students are responsible for turning their schedule in to the Financial Aid & Veterans' Affairs Office each semester they want to use VA benefits and each time they make a schedule change (add or drop a class or change sections).
6. Students need to notify the Financial Aid & Veterans Affairs' Office if they change their major.
7. Benefits are only paid for the amount of time students are in class. For example, late start classes do not have benefits paid for the full semester; instead, the VA will pay benefits only for the amount of time you are enrolled in the class.
8. Students on Academic Suspension are not eligible to receive VA benefits. Students are required to maintain a 2.0 GPA in order to be eligible for state and federal VA benefits. Students who are receiving financial aid (federal or state grants and federal student loans) must also meet the Satisfactory Academic Progress standards listed in the College Catalog.

Do I need to do a monthly self-certification with the VA? How do I certify?

- If you receive Chapter 30 GI Bill Active Duty, Chapter 1606 GI Bill Reservists/National Guard, or Chapter 1607 REAP benefits, you need to certify your enrollment on the last day of each month.
- Your Certificate of Eligibility from the VA will tell you if you need to certify and how to certify. You can certify online at gibill.va.gov/wave or by calling 877-823-2378.

Can I receive other forms of financial aid along with my Veterans' Educational Benefits?

Yes! There are several other sources of aid that veterans can apply for:

- Federal Grants/Direct Loans – Veterans can also apply for the Federal Pell grant and/or Direct Loans by completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid online at www.fafsa.gov. Pell grants are income based.
- IVG – Veterans can apply for the Illinois Veterans' Grant. For assistance or to apply, go to www.isac.org and click on "Students & Parents", "During College - Paying", "Military Service", under "ISAC Programs", click "Illinois Veterans Grant Program".
- ING – Members of the Illinois National Guard may apply for the Illinois National Guard Program. For assistance or to apply, go to www.isac.org and click on "Students & Parents", "During College - Paying", "Military Service", under "ISAC Programs", click "Illinois National Guard Grant". ING applications must be completed once per year. Please see the "Application Deadline Dates" on that site for more information.
- MIA/POW – Dependents of a person who was an Illinois resident at the time they entered active duty and has been declared to be a prisoner of war, missing in action, dead as a result of a service-connected disability, or disabled with a 100 percent disability as the result of a service-connected cause as recognized by the U.S. Department of Veterans' Affairs or the U.S. Department of Defense, may be eligible to receive the MIA/POW Scholarship. Please go to www2.illinois.gov/veterans and click on "State Benefits", "Education", to apply and for more information.
- Scholarships – Veterans can apply for scholarships through the Richland Community College Foundation Office. Applications for fall and spring scholarships and a complete list of scholarships are available online at richland.edu/foundation/scholarships.

VA Benefits

Chapter 30 Information

Montgomery GI Bill (Active Duty)

- ✓ Chapter 30 pays a monthly stipend to the student: 2014 value = \$1648 plus any kicker
 - Student must request certification through the Financial Aid & Veteran Affairs office each semester
 - Student must verify continued attendance through WAVE each month: www.gibill.va.gov/wave or 877-823-2378.
 - First payment will be pro-rated based on class start date and paid in arrears on the first day of the month after classes begin
 - Tuition and fees are not paid by the VA. Students may apply for other aid or make payment arrangements with the college
- ✓ Students:
 - Full time = 12 credit hours for 16 week semesters, 6 credit hours for 8 week semesters
 - 3/4 time = 9-11 credit hours for 16 week semesters, 4-5 credit hours for 8 week semesters – monthly stipend is paid at 75% of full value
 - 1/2 time – 6-8 credit hours for 16 week semesters, 3 credit hours for 8 week semesters – monthly stipend is paid at 50% of full value
 - < 1/2 time – payment for the semester is limited to Tuition and Fees paid
- ✓ What happens if I drop a class
 - A dropped class may reduce your credit hours to less than full time status
 - If this happens, VA will calculate amount overpaid and send you a debt letter
 - Note: for non-punitive (W) grades VA will recalculate your status back to the start of the term
 - The portion of the debt representing the period from start of term until the drop date may be waived using the 6-hour exclusion rule: students are allowed to do this once, for up to 6 hours of withdrawal in a single term
- ✓ Who to Contact if there is a problem:
 - Richland Community College School Certifying Official: 217-875-7211 ext. 205
 - GI Bill Regional Office: 888-442-4551
 - Address Change or Banking Information Change: 877-838-2778
 - VA Debt Management Center: 800-827-0698

VA Benefits

Chapter 31 Information

Vocational Rehabilitation

- ✓ Chapter 31 Pays tuition and fees directly to the college, and books & supplies plus a monthly stipend to the student: \$603.33 with no dependents, \$748.28 with one dependent, \$881.91 with two dependents
 - Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor approves program using VA Form 22-1905
 - Student must request certification through the Financial Aid and Veteran Affairs office each semester
 - College Bookstore will provide Books & Supplies and bill Vocational Rehabilitation
 - Student completes VA Form 28-1905 and obtains signature of Veteran Services Coordinator
 - Take Completed forms to the information desk at the bookstore
- ✓ Financial Aid and Veteran Affairs reports enrollment to Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor to establish monthly stipend
- ✓ Cashiers office bills the vocational rehabilitation counselor for tuition and fees
 - Tuition and fees payment will be posted when received
- ✓ Students:
 - Full time = 12 credit hours for 16 week semesters, 6 credit hours for 8 week semesters
 - Monthly payment will be reduced based on percent enrollment between half and full time
 - $\leq 1/2$ time – no monthly payment to student, only tuition, fees and book allowance will be paid
- ✓ What happens if I Drop a Class
 - Contact your vocational rehabilitation counselor to discuss dropping a class and notify Financial Aid & Veteran Affairs office
- ✓ Who to Contact if there is a problem:
 - Richland Community College School Certifying Official: 217-875-7211 ext. 205
 - Vocational Rehabilitation Chicago Office: 312-980-4458

VA Benefits

Chapter 33 Information

Montgomery GI Bill (Active Duty)

- ✓ Chapter 33 pays tuition and fees directly to the college, plus a monthly stipend to the student and a book allowance (\$51.66 per semester hour capped at \$1000 per academic year)
 - Student must request certification through the Financial Aid and Veteran Affairs office each semester
 - Book stipend pays 12 days prior to first day of class
 - Tuition and fee payment comes to the college no earlier than 10 days after classes begin
 - First monthly payment will be pro-rated based on class start date and paid in arrears on the first day of the month after classes begin
- ✓ Students:
 - Full time = 12 credit hours for 16 week semesters, 6 credit hours for 8 week semesters
 - Monthly payment will be reduced based on percent enrollment between half and full time
 - $\leq 1/2$ time – no monthly payment to student, only tuition, fees and book allowance will be paid
- ✓ What happens if I Drop a Class
 - If VA paid Tuition and Fees, they will establish a debt with either the student or the school to recoup the cost for the dropped class
 - If the drop changes you to less than full time status, VA will recalculate your monthly living allowance (potentially all the way back to the beginning of the term) and establish a debt with the student to recoup the overpayment
- ✓ Who to Contact if there is a problem:
 - Richland Community College School Certifying Official: 217-875-7211 ext. 205
 - GI Bill Regional Office: 888-442-4551
 - Address Change or Banking Information Change: 877-838-2778
 - VA Debt Management Center: 800-827-0698

VA Benefits

Chapter 35 Information

Dependents Educational Assistance (DEA)

- ✓ Chapter 35 pays a monthly stipend to the student: 2014 value = \$1018
 - Student must request certification through the Financial Aid and Veteran Affairs office each semester
 - First payment will be pro-rated based on class start date and paid in arrears on the first day of the month after classes begin
 - Tuition and fees are not paid by the VA. Students may apply for other aid or make payment arrangements with the college.
- ✓ Students:
 - Full time = 12 credit hours for 16 week semesters, 6 credit hours for 8 week semesters
 - 3/4 time = 9-11 credit hours for 16 week semesters, 4-5 credit hours for 8 week semesters – monthly stipend is paid at 75% of full value
 - 1/2 time – 6-8 credit hours for 16 week semesters, 3 credit hours for 8 week semesters – monthly stipend is paid at 50% of full value
 - < 1/2 time – payment for the semester is limited to Tuition and Fees paid
- ✓ What happens if I drop a class
 - A dropped class may reduce your credit hours to less than full time status
 - If this happens, VA will calculate amount overpaid and send you a debt letter
 - Note: for non-punitive (W) grades VA will recalculate your status back to the start of the term
 - The portion of the debt representing the period from start of term until the drop date may be waived using the 6-hour exclusion rule: they are allowed to do this once, for up to 6 hours of withdrawal in a single term
- ✓ Who to Contact if there is a problem:
 - Richland College School Certifying Official: 217-875-7211 ext. 205
 - GI Bill Regional Office: 888-442-4551
 - Address Change or Banking Information Change: 877-838-2778
 - VA Debt Management Center: 800-827-0698

VA Benefits

Chapter 1606 Information

Montgomery GI Bill (Selected Reserve)

- ✓ Chapter 1606 pays a monthly stipend to the student: 2014 value = \$362 plus any kicker
 - Student must request certification through the Financial Aid and Veteran Affairs office each semester
 - Student must verify continued attendance through WAVE each month:
www.gibill.va.gov/wave or 877-823-2378
 - First payment will be pro-rated based on class start date and paid in arrears on the first day of the month after classes begin
 - Tuition and fees are not paid by the VA. Students may apply for other aid or make payment arrangements with the college
- ✓ Students:
 - Full time = 12 credit hours for 16 week semesters, 6 credit hours for 8 week semesters
 - 3/4 time = 9-11 credit hours for 16 week semesters, 4-5 credit hours for 8 week semesters – monthly stipend is paid at 75% of full value
 - 1/2 time – 6-8 credit hours for 16 week semesters, 3 credit hours for 8 week semesters – monthly stipend is paid at 50% of full value
 - < 1/2 time – payment for the semester is limited to Tuition and Fees paid
- ✓ Who to Contact if there is a problem:
 - Richland Community College School Certifying Official: 217-875-7211 ext. 205
 - GI Bill Regional Office: 888-442-4551
 - Address Change or Banking Information Change: 877-838-2778
 - VA Debt Management Center: 800-827-0698

VA Benefits

Chapter 1607 Information

Montgomery GI Bill (Selected Reserve)

- ✓ Chapter 1607 pays a monthly stipend to the student: Amount depends on Total Active Federal Time
 - Student must request certification through the Financial Aid and Veteran Affairs office each semester
 - Student must verify continued attendance through WAVE each month: www.gibill.va.gov/wave or 877-823-2378
 - First payment will be pro-rated based on class start date and paid in arrears on the first day of the month after classes begin
 - Tuition and fees are not paid by the VA. Students may apply for other aid or make payment arrangements with the college
- ✓ Students:
 - Full time = 12 credit hours for 16 week semesters, 6 credit hours for 8 week semesters
 - 3/4 time = 9-11 credit hours for 16 week semesters, 4-5 credit hours for 8 week semesters – monthly stipend is paid at 75% of full value
 - 1/2 time – 6-8 credit hours for 16 week semesters, 3 credit hours for 8 week semesters – monthly stipend is paid at 50% of full value
 - < 1/2 time – payment for the semester is limited to Tuition and Fees paid
- ✓ Who to Contact if there is a problem:
 - Richland Community College School Certifying Official: 217-875-7211 ext. 205
 - GI Bill Regional Office: 888-442-4551
 - Address Change or Banking Information Change: 877-838-2778
 - VA Debt Management Center: 800-827-0698

Illinois Benefits

Illinois Veterans Grants (IVG)

IVG Program Overview {ISAC Rules, Part 2733}

The Illinois Veteran Grant (IVG) Program pays eligible tuition and mandatory fees directly to the school. Benefits are limited to use only at Illinois public colleges or community colleges.

Tuition and fees covered include: Tuition, Academic/Technology Fees, and Student Registration Fees.

Qualified applicants may use this grant at the undergraduate or graduate level for the equivalent of four academic years of full-time enrollment, which is measured in eligibility units.

It is the applicant's responsibility to obtain and submit all required documentation to allow the application to be processed so that the applicant can notify the college of eligibility status by the last scheduled day of classes for the term for which a grant is requested. Applications may be obtained through the Financial Aid and Veterans Affairs office.

Students who qualify for IVG and the Montgomery G.I. Bill may receive benefits from both programs during the same academic year for eligible educational expenses.

IVG Eligibility Requirements {ISAC Rules, Section 2733.20 and 2733.30}

To be eligible for the Illinois Veteran Grant, a student must:

- Meet one of the following two criteria:
 - Have served at least one year of federal active duty service in the Armed Forces of the United States, which may include the Illinois National Guard and the Reserve component of the Armed Forces, or
 - Regardless of length of service, have served in a foreign country in a time of hostilities in that country; was medically discharged for service related reasons; or was discharged prior to August 11, 1967.
- Have received an honorable discharge (general discharge under honorable conditions is not eligible) for each period of federal active duty service, and/or be honorably serving.** Contact information is available for Illinois military personnel who need to request a copy of the DD214 (equivalent to the DD214 Member 4).
- Not be a member of the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC).
- Meets one of the following two criteria:

RICHLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE FINANCIAL AID VETERAN AFFAIRS

- have been a resident of Illinois at the time of entering federal active duty or within six months prior to entering the service, or
 - have been a student at an Illinois public 2- or 4-year college at the time of entering federal active duty.
- Meets one of the following two criteria:
 - have established, or plan to establish, Illinois residency within six months after leaving federal active duty service, or
 - if married to a person in continued military service:
 - have applied for this grant within six months after and including the date that the spouse was stationed within Illinois, or
 - if the spouse was stationed outside Illinois, have established or plan to establish Illinois residency within six months after and including the date the spouse separated.
- Reside in Illinois unless the student is serving federal active duty service at the time of enrollment in college or residing with a spouse in continued military service who is currently stationed outside of Illinois.
- Not be in default on any student loan, nor owe a refund on any state or federal grant.

In order to receive benefits, qualified applicants must be enrolled at an Illinois public 2- or 4-year college and maintain the minimum grade point average (GPA) required by that college.

An IVG Program Benefits Guide is available for use in understanding IVG benefits.

*If the student receives benefits from the IVG Program while serving on federal active duty service, upon discharge the student will be required to verify that service has been characterized as honorable.

IVG Eligibility Units

Illinois Veteran Grant recipients may receive benefits limited to the equivalent of four academic years of full-time enrollment, which includes summer terms. IVG eligibility units are based on the enrolled hours for a particular term, not the dollar amount of the benefits paid. Credit and noncredit hours, for which benefits are used, are converted to eligibility units according to the following chart:

Number of Hours	Semester School	Quarter School
12 or more hours	12 units	8 units
9 - 11.99 hours	9 units	6 units
6 - 8.99 hours	6 units	4 units
3 - 5.99 hours	3 units	2 units
0 - 2.99 hours	1 unit	1 unit

Recipients may continue to accumulate up to 120 units, after which point eligibility for program benefits will cease. Full program benefits may be extended for one additional term if the recipient has accumulated fewer than 120 eligibility units but does not have enough units remaining for the number of hours in which s/he is enrolled for the term.

In the event that a recipient withdraws from a course(s) prior to the end of a term, eligibility units will be assessed in proportion with the total dollars that are paid. If the recipient has had any portion of his/her tuition and fees paid, at least one eligibility unit will be charged to the recipient.

Application Procedures for IVG {ISAC Rules, Section 2733.20}

To apply for the Illinois Veteran Grant, a veteran must complete an Illinois Veteran Grant (IVG) Application. Applications for IVG can be submitted anytime during the academic year for which assistance is being requested, and need to be submitted only once to establish eligibility. You may obtain an application from the office of Financial Aid and Veterans Affairs.

To assist institutions with the timely submission of claims for all IVG eligible students, applicants must notify the school by the end of the school term for which assistance is requested in order to receive IVG benefits for that term.

Processing Time

Fully completed applications (including all required documentation) must be received at ISAC allowing sufficient time to complete processing prior to the last scheduled day of classes in the term for which a grant is requested. If the student must obtain required documentation, it could take a minimum of eight to ten weeks. ISAC's processing time is approximately four weeks.

Establishing Eligibility

A notice of eligibility from ISAC must be used by the institution to establish a qualified applicant's initial eligibility. This notice can be from variety of sources, including the IVG Eligibility Data at My Zone. Qualified applicants will receive a Notice of Eligibility letter from ISAC. The school is not required to have a copy of this letter.

Veteran Documentation

In addition to the application, the veteran must provide a copy of his or her Department of Defense Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty (DD214 Member 4 copy), or its equivalent, for all periods of active service. Contact information is available for Illinois military personnel who need to request a copy of the DD214 (equivalent to the DD214 Member 4).

Illinois residents may apply and begin using their IVG benefits while serving on active duty in the Armed Forces, but must reapply for the grant after separation and include copies of all re-enlistment and/or extension documents. Illinois residency for the purposes of the IVG Program can be established in six months. If the applicant's DD Form 214 does not indicate Illinois residency when entering and/or separating from the Armed Forces, ISAC Rules Section 2733.20 (j) (4) explains in detail the documents that can be used to verify residency for this program.

Illinois Benefits

Illinois National Guard Grant (ING) Grant Program

ING Grant Program Overview {ISAC Rules, Part 2730}

If you are currently serving in the Illinois National Guard you may be eligible for the Illinois National Guard (ING) Grant Program. The Illinois National Guard (ING) Grant pays tuition and eligible fees (registration, graduation, general activity, matriculation and term fees) at all Illinois public universities or public community colleges.

Tuition and fees covered include: Tuition, Academic/Technology Fees, and Student Registration Fees.

This grant can be used for either undergraduate or graduate enrollment for the equivalent of four or six academic years of full-time enrollment, which is measured in eligibility units. Beginning in the fall of 2013, recipients who have completed less than 10 years of active duty ING service may accumulate up to 120 eligibility units. Recipients who have completed more than 10 years of active duty ING service may accumulate up to 180 eligibility units. There is no minimum enrollment requirement and non-credit courses are eligible for the ING Grant. The ING Grant is an entitlement program and is awarded to eligible recipients regardless of the funding level.

ING Eligibility Requirements {ISAC Rules, Section 2730.20 and 2730.30}

To be eligible for the Illinois National Guard Grant, a student must:

- Be an Illinois National Guard member, defined as meeting one of these two criterion:
 - be active in the Illinois National Guard **or**
 - have been active in the Illinois National Guard for at least five consecutive years and have been called to federal active duty for at least six months and be within 12 months after your discharge date from the Illinois National Guard
- Have completed one full year of service in the Illinois National Guard
- Be an enlisted member or an officer (Public Act 94-583)
- Be enrolled at an Illinois public 2- or 4-year college
- Not be in default on any student loan, nor owe a refund on any state or federal grant
- Maintain an acceptable grade point average (GPA) according to the policy determined by your college

Additionally, those individuals who have been active in the Illinois National Guard for at least five consecutive years, had their studies interrupted by being called to federal active duty for at least six

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months, and meet eligibility requirements in addition to those listed above may be eligible to receive an additional year of ING Grant Program eligibility, even after their membership in the Illinois National Guard has ended. Questions regarding individual eligibility status under this legislation should be directed to the applicant's chain of command, or to the Education/Incentives Branch of the Military Personnel Office at 217.761.3782.

High school students may enlist during their junior year and complete their calendar year of service prior to college attendance. This allows graduating high school students to use the grant immediately upon entering college.

ING Grant Eligibility Units

Illinois National Guard (ING) Grant benefits for an academic year are determined based on the number of credit hours for which the qualified applicant is enrolled in a particular term.

Effective for the 2013-14 academic year (which begins with the fall 2013 term):

- Qualified applicants who have completed less than ten years of active duty ING service may receive ING Grant benefits for a maximum of the equivalent of four academic years of full-time enrollment (i.e., these recipients may continue to reapply and accumulate up to 120 eligibility units).
- Qualified applicants who have completed ten years or more of active duty ING service may receive ING Grant benefits for a maximum of the equivalent of six academic years of full-time enrollment (i.e., these recipients may continue to reapply and accumulate up to 180 eligibility units). Note that the six-year equivalent maximum (180 eligibility units) is cumulative, and includes benefits received when the qualified applicant had less than ten years of active duty ING service.

The amount of eligibility a recipient has used is determined by converting credit hours (and noncredit hours for which benefits are used) to eligibility units, as indicated below:

Number of Hours	Semester School	Quarter School
12 or more hours	12 units	8 units
9 - 11.99 hours	9 units	6 units
6 - 8.99 hours	6 units	4 units
3 - 5.99 hours	3 units	2 units
0 - 2.99 hours	1 units	1 unit

ING Grant eligibility units are not based on the dollar amount of the benefits paid.

Full program benefits may be extended for one additional term if the recipient has accumulated fewer than the maximum number of eligibility units but does not have enough units remaining for the number of hours in which he or she is enrolled for that term.

If an eligible recipient withdraws from enrollment after the expiration of the tuition refund/withdrawal adjustment period, the recipient will receive a grant for costs incurred up to the term award provided the institution's tuition refund policy indicates the recipient has incurred charges in the amount of the claim.

The Illinois National Guard member must repay any ING grant benefits received if the National Guard enlistment commitment is not fulfilled.

Application Procedures for the ING Grant {ISAC Rules, Section 2730.20}

Interactive Application

The online interactive Illinois National Guard (ING) Grant application is available on the ISAC website (www.isac.org) in the ING section: http://www.isac.org/students/during-college/applying-for-financial-aid/applications/ing_applying/index.html

Eligibility in one academic year does not carry over to future years, therefore, all students must apply for the ING Grant annually. Students who are unable to apply online or have questions about the process should be instructed to contact an ISAC Call Center Representative or you may contact Veteran's Affairs at Richland Community College in the Financial Aid Office (ext. 205).

Application Deadlines

ISAC must receive a complete application on or before the deadline listed below. For applicants who are unable to apply online and have received ISAC approval for an alternate means of applying, the application received date will be based upon the U.S. Postal Service postmark date.

The deadline dates for ING applications are:

October 1 – full year consideration

March 1 – only second semester, second and/or third quarter consideration

June 15 – only summer term consideration

Applications received by ISAC after these deadline dates will be processed only for subsequent terms, with June 15 as the final date of acceptance for the summer term.

Application Confirmation and Acknowledgement

Once an online application has been successfully submitted, a Confirmation Page will display to verify the exact date and time it was received by ISAC. A Portable Document Format (PDF) version of the application also displays which may be printed or saved as an electronic file.

Applicants who provide an e-mail address when they apply will be sent an Acknowledgement (based on the academic year for which they apply) similar to the confirmation page that displays after the application is entered. A PDF version of the application is also attached to the Acknowledgement. To assist you with questions you receive from students regarding the ING online application process, refer to ING Grant pages in Types of Financial Aid in Students During-College.

Certification

After ING applications are received, a component of the application process involves certification from the Illinois Department of Military Affairs as to the eligibility status in the Illinois National Guard. ISAC compiles a listing of applicants on a regular basis and forwards the listing to the Illinois Department of Military Affairs to provide:

- verification that each National Guard member is enlisted;
- verification that each National Guard member is on active duty status in the Illinois Army or Air National Guard;
- verification that each National Guard member has served for at least one year in the Illinois National Guard;
- verification of the number of years that each National Guard member has completed of active duty ING service; and
- the date on which service or eligibility will end.

Once the eligibility confirmation has been received from the Illinois Department of Military Affairs, qualified applicants are sent a Notice of Eligibility. Ineligible applicants will receive written notification from ISAC of their ineligibility to receive program benefits. Postsecondary schools are NOT required to collect Notice of Eligibility letters from students. Changes of address, name, status with the Illinois National Guard or institution of attendance must be reported in writing to ISAC.

Source material for IVG and ING can be found on the ISAC website: <http://www.isac.org/>

Illinois State Scholarships

Bright Start Fallen Heroes

The state will deposit \$2500.00 in a Bright Start account for each child of a fallen Service member who serves in Operation Iraqi Freedom or Enduring Freedom upon the request of a surviving Family member. All Illinois servicemen and women are eligible.

Scholarship Terms:

- The money will be invested in an age-based portfolio, which adjusts automatically as the beneficiary ages. The closer the child is to college age, the more conservative the investments become.
- Payments will be made by the Treasurer's office directly to an accredited college or university anywhere in the U.S. or selected institutions abroad.
- The scholarship will be applied only to tuition, fees and room and board and must be spent before the child reaches 30 years old.
- Individuals other than the State of Illinois can make tax-free contributions to the scholarship account but the State of Illinois retains control of account disbursements.
- The scholarship can be used in conjunction with other federal benefits that children of fallen Service members are eligible to receive.

Eligibility: The beneficiary must be a U.S. citizen under the age of 30 years old. Fallen Heroes home of record on file with the U.S. Department of Defense must be in Illinois. A photocopy of a birth certificate, adoption, certificate or marriage license (in case of a stepchild) must be provided.

Learn More:

<http://www.treasurer.il.gov...SCHOLARSHIP AGREEMENT FALLEN HERO fillin 2010-05-25.pdf>

MIA/POW

If you are the dependent of a person who was an Illinois resident at the time he/she entered active duty and has been declared to be a prisoner of war, missing in action, dead as a result of a service-connected disability, or disabled with a 100 percent disability as the result of a service-connected cause as recognized by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs or the U.S. Department of Defense, you may be eligible to receive the MIA/POW Scholarship. This scholarship may be used at public colleges in Illinois, and is administered by the Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs.

For more information, contact Tracy Kimmel at 217.782.3564 or visit the website:

<http://www.isac.org/students/during-college/types-of-financial-aid/scholarships/mia-pow-scholarship.html> or <http://www.illinois.gov/veterans/Pages/default.aspx>

DD 214s ARE AVAILABLE ONLINE

**VETERANS CAN NOW OBTAIN THEIR DD214s
ONLINE AT THE FOLLOWING WEBSITE:**

<http://vetrecs.archives.gov>

OR BY CALLING THE FOLLOWING NUMBER:

(314) 801-0800

**MILITARY RECORDS CAN ALSO BE REQUESTED
VIA THE ABOVE WEBSITE/NUMBER**

**NEXT OF KIN OF DECEASED VETERANS MAY ALSO
USE THE ABOVE WEBSITE/NUMBER TO REQUEST
MILITARY RECORDS & DD214s**

LOCAL AREA MILITARY RELATED ORGANIZATIONS

DECATUR, MACON COUNTY, CENTRAL, ILLINOIS AREA RELATED ORGANIZATIONS

Military Order of the Purple Heart – NSO
250 N. Water St.
Suite 1264
Decatur IL 62523
(217) 420-4000

Veterans of Foreign Wars – Oren L Davis Post No. 99
925 N. Water St.
Decatur IL 62523
(217) 428-6811

Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs
3133 N. Woodford St., Ste. 2B
Decatur IL 62526
8:30-5:00 Daily
(217) 875-3285

Decatur Community Based Outpatient Clinic
3035 E. Mound Road
Decatur IL 62526
Phone: (217)875-2670
Hours
Monday - Friday
8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Disabled American Veterans
(217) 428-7867
1700 N. lake Shore Dr.
Decatur IL 62526

Wilson & Taylor VFW Post 730
(217) 428-7191
537 E. Sheridan St.
Decatur IL 62521-2660

RICHLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE FINANCIAL AID VETERAN AFFAIRS

Kathie Powless
The Veterans Assistance Commission
Macon County Office Building
141 S. Main St. Room 210
Decatur IL 62523

Hours

Monday – Friday
8:30 a.m. - 4:15 p.m.
217-424-1376

American Legion Castle Williams Post 105
1535 Legion Dr.
Decatur IL 62521
217-423-1411

American Legion Post 429
Rural Route 2
Lovington IL 61937
217-873-4465

Veterans Funeral Care
Moran & Goebel
Decatur IL 62526
217-875-2004

VA Medical Center
Veterans Affairs Illiana Health Care System
1900 E. Main St.
Danville IL 61832
217-554-3000

VFW Post 4431
107 N. Poplar St.
Pana IL 62557

Education and Educational Benefit Links

GI Bill

Official VA benefit website. General information on education benefits.

<http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/>

VONAPP – Veterans on-line application for VA Educational Benefits

<http://vabenefits.vba.va.gov/vonapp/main.asp>

WAVE – Web Automated Verification of Enrollment

Allows students to submit monthly enrollment verification – For student using Chapter 30 GI Bill, Chapter 1606 GI Bill Reservists/National Guard, and 1607 REAP

<https://www.gibill.va.gov/wave/index.do> or call 877-823-2378

VA Debt Management Center (DMC)

Contact for VA educational benefit debts

<http://va.gov/debtman/>

E-Benefits

One-stop shop for online benefits-related tools and information

<https://www.ebenefits.va.gov/ebenefits-portal/ebenefits.portal>

Military Transcripts

<http://jointserVICetranscript.com/> - Army, Marine, Navy and Coast Guard transcripts

Direct Deposit for Educational Benefits

877-838-2778

Vocational Rehab

<http://www.benefits.va.gov/vocrehab/>

IVG

[http://www.isac.org/students/during-college/types-of-financial-aid/grants/illinois-veteran-grant-\(ivg\)-program.html](http://www.isac.org/students/during-college/types-of-financial-aid/grants/illinois-veteran-grant-(ivg)-program.html)

ING

[http://www.isac.org/students/during-college/types-of-financial-aid/grants/illinois-national-guard-\(ing\)-grant-program.html](http://www.isac.org/students/during-college/types-of-financial-aid/grants/illinois-national-guard-(ing)-grant-program.html)

MIA/POW

<https://www.isac.org/spanish/estudiante-y-padres/universidad/financiamiento/becas/mia-pow.html>
or <http://www.illinois.gov/veterans/Pages/default.aspx>

Student Veterans of America (SVA)

<http://wewin.studentveterans.org>

Miscellaneous

VA Forms

<http://va.gov/vaforms/>

VA Phone number 888-442-4551

Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs

Information about State of Illinois benefits and resources for veterans

<https://www.illinois.gov/veterans/Pages/default.aspx>

Obtaining a DD214

<http://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/>

Employment

Illinois Troops to Teachers Program

<http://iltroops.org/> or

<http://proudtoserveagain.com/>

Employment resources for veterans

Federal - <http://www.va.gov/vetsinworkplace/veteranresources.asp>

State - http://www.ides.illinois.gov/Pages/Veteran_Services.aspx

Work 4 Illinois Veterans Outreach Program

<http://work.illinois.gov/vetsopgm.htm>

Health and Wellness

VA Clinic
3035 E Mound Rd
Decatur IL 62526
217-875-2670 or 800-320-8387

Vet Center (Veterans Resource Center
Counseling, readjustment and outreach resources
<http://www.vetcenter.va.gov/>
Springfield, IL Vet Center
1227 S Ninth Street
Springfield IL 62703
217-492-4955 or 877-927-8387

Veteran's Assistance Department
<http://www.iacvac.org/>
Macon County Office Building
141 S Main St, Room 210
Decatur IL 62523
217-424-1376

Illinois Warrior Assistance Program
<http://illinoiswarrior.com/>
Transition, Counseling, Support
866-554-4927

Suicide Prevention Hotline
800-273-TALK (8355)

Social Organizations for Veterans

VFW
<https://www.vfwil.org/>

American Legion
<http://illegion.org/>

History of American Flag

For more than 200 years, the American flag has been the symbol of our nation's strength and unity. It's been a source of pride and inspiration for millions of citizens. And the American Flag has been a prominent icon in our national history. Here are the highlights of its unique past.

On January 1, 1776, the Continental Army was reorganized in accordance with a Congressional resolution which placed American forces under George Washington's control. On that New Year's Day the Continental Army was laying siege to Boston which had been taken over by the British Army. Washington ordered the Grand Union flag hoisted above his base at Prospect Hill. It had 13 alternate red and white stripes and the British Union Jack in the upper left-hand corner (the canton).

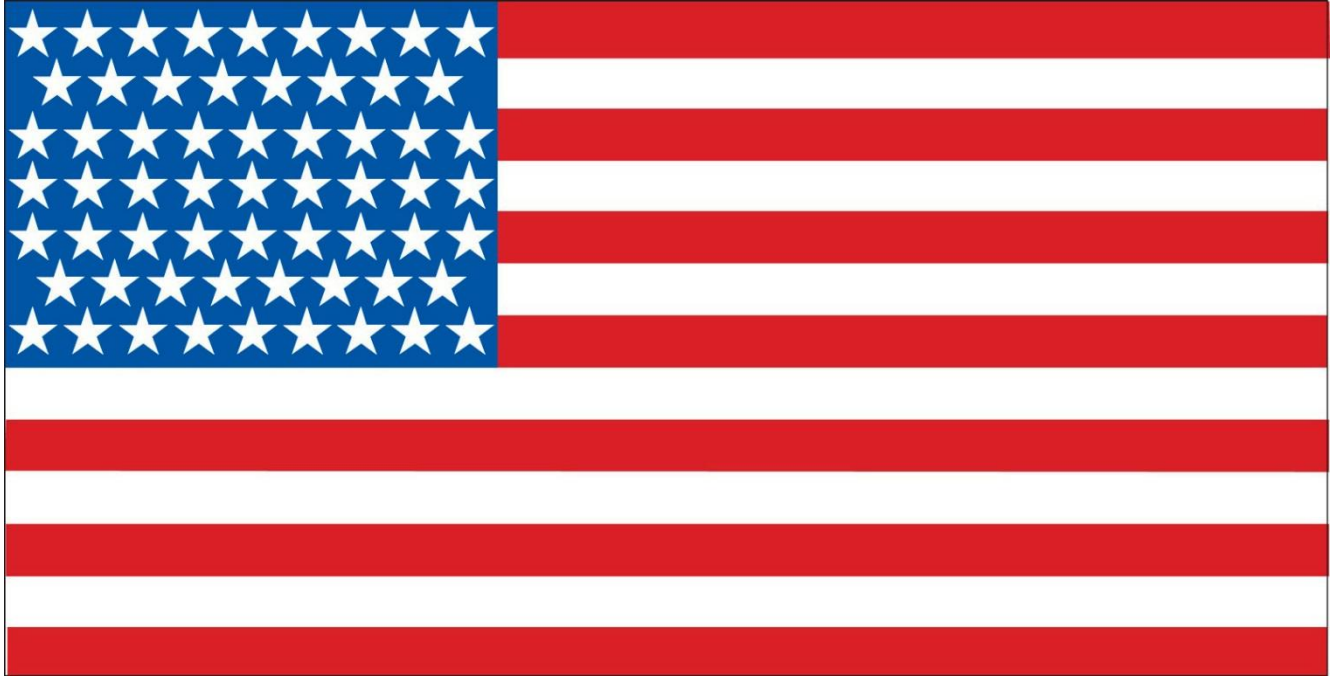
No one knows with **absolute certainty** who designed the first stars and stripes or who made it. Congressman [Francis Hopkinson](#) seems most likely to have designed it, and few historians believe that [Betsy Ross](#), a Philadelphia seamstress, made the first one sometime around May of 1776.

On June 14, 1777, in order to establish an official flag for the new nation, the Continental Congress passed the first Flag Act: "Resolved that the flag of the United States be made of thirteen stripes, alternate red and white; that the union be thirteen stars, white in a blue field, representing a new Constellation."

Between 1777 and 1960, Congress passed several acts that changed the shape, design and arrangement of the flag and allowed for additional stars and stripes to be added to reflect the admission of each new state.

- Act of January 13, 1794 - provided for 15 stripes and 15 stars after May 1795.
- Act of April 4, 1818 - provided for 13 stripes and one star for each state, to be added to the flag on the 4th of July following the admission of each new state, signed by President Monroe.
- Executive Order of President Taft dated June 24, 1912 - established proportions of the flag and provided for arrangement of the stars in six horizontal rows of eight each, a single point of each star to be upward.
- Executive Order of President Eisenhower dated January 3, 1959 - provided for the arrangement of the stars in seven rows of seven stars each, staggered horizontally and vertically.
- Executive Order of President Eisenhower dated August 21, 1959 - provided for the arrangement of the stars in nine rows of stars staggered horizontally and eleven rows of stars staggered vertically.

Today the flag consists of thirteen horizontal stripes, seven red alternating with 6 white. The stripes represent the original 13 colonies; the stars represent the 50 states of the Union. The colors of the flag are symbolic as well: Red symbolizes Hardiness and Valor, White symbolizes Purity and Innocence and Blue represents Vigilance, Perseverance and Justice.





Richland
COMMUNITY COLLEGE